

Appln. No.: 10/720,046

Amendment dated: February 28, 2006

Reply to the Office Action of November 28, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 4 and 6.

The first sheet includes a change to Fig. 4 replaces the original sheet. Item 17 is changed to 13 and β_2 is changed to α .

The second sheet which includes Figs. 6 and 7 replaces the original sheet. Numeral 60 is added to Fig. 6.

Attachments: Two replacement sheets.

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REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-18 are pending in this application.

The Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is not correct. However, Claim 4 has been canceled and its subject matter substantially incorporated into Claim 1. The rejection of this claim is no longer applicable.

Amendments to the Drawings and Specification

The Office Action states at paragraph 2 that Figures 1 and 4 are different designations, α (alpha) or β_2 (beta-2), to describe the same angle and numerals 13 or 17 to describe the support.

Fig. 4 is amended herein to change β_2 to α , and numeral 17 to 13. A corresponding amendment is made to the specification a paragraph [00032] and [00033].

Also, Fig. 6 is amended to incorporate the inadvertently omitted numeral 60 for the lines of weakening described at paragraph [00028] of the specification.

The Rejections under the Prior Art

1. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,180,837 (hereinafter, "Rudolph"). Rudolph is directed to a device for separating flexible index strips from a sheet of said strips.

Claim 1 is amended herein to additionally recite steps of providing an apparatus having angle adjustment means for establishing a desired feeding angle of the semi-compliant material into a housing positioned at a support angle from a support surface, and the step of adjustably moving the housing to the desired support angle to establish the desired feeding angle of the semi-compliant material into the housing. The angle adjustment means includes an activator for adjustably moving the housing.

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Support for these recitations may be found in the specification at paragraphs [00032] and [00033]. The actuator for adjustably moving the housing to a desired support angle is schematically shown in Fig. 4 as item 120 and described in the specification at paragraph [00033] as a means configured to function as piston and cylinder unit coupled to and displacing the common base 18 to the desired position of the feed roller 35 relative to the roll 21.

Rudolph does not disclose or suggest such a feature. The Office Action refers to the position of roller 20 of Rudolph (Fig. 7) being adjustable by means of plate 26 and screw 27. These are features within housing 10.

In contrast to this, Applicants' invention provides adjustment of the angle at which the compliant material is fed to the housing. Moreover, this adjustment is made by moving the housing to a desired support angle, i.e., an angle at which the housing itself is oriented with respect to a support surface. Rudolph does not disclose or suggest such features. Accordingly, claims 1 and all claims depending therefrom are submitted to be allowable over the cited Rudolph patent. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

2. Claims 1-3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,717,292 (hereinafter, "Honeycutt et al.").

Honeycutt et al. is directed to an apparatus for degating plastic articles from a runner. The articles are positioned between a pair of traveling belts which are guided along a path flexing the articles relative to the runner so as to break the articles free from the runner.

Claim 1 is amended herein as described above. It should be noted that there is no feature of the Honeycutt et al. apparatus which adjusts the angle at which the compliant material is fed to the housing of the apparatus, nor is there any means disclosed for adjusting the inclination of the housing to a desired angle for thereby adjusting the feed angle of the compliant material. Accordingly, Claim 1 and all claims depending therefrom are submitted to be allowable over the

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cited Honeycutt et al. patent. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

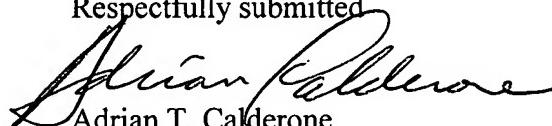
The Withdrawn Claims

Claims 6-18 have been withdrawn from consideration for lack of an allowable generic or linking claim. In view of the Amendment herein, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1, identified in the Office Action of September 20, 2005 as linking the inventions of groups A (Claims 7, 9 and 14) and E (Claim 13), is allowable. Accordingly, withdrawal of the restriction requirement of the linked inventions and examination of the claims are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons stated above all of the pending claims are submitted to be in condition for allowance, the same being respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted



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